

CLAIMS

1. A load ring for raising and/or lowering an oilfield tubular having a box end and a pin end, comprising:

a cylindrical ring sized to slide over the exterior surface of the box end of said tubular, said ring having a first end, a second end, and a shoulder ring having upper and lower surfaces at its first end and a sidewall between said second end and said shoulder end, said sidewall having a circumferential groove about its interior surface, and a second groove through said sidewall for accessing said circumferential groove;

a split-ring metal band having first and second ends positioned within said circumferential groove having a latch mechanism connected between said first and second ends of said band, said latch mechanism having a handle accessible through said second groove which, when activated, reduces the internal diameter of said band, and when deactivated, increases the internal diameter of said band, whereby the activation of said handle causes said band to grip the exterior surface of said tubular, and the deactivation of said handle causes said band to release the exterior surface of said tubular.

2. The load ring according to Claim 1, wherein said band has, at least in parts, a saw tooth inner diameter for gripping the external surfaces of said oilfield tubular.

3. The load ring according to Claim 2, wherein the circumferential groove has an inclined surface, and said metal band has an inclined surface which can ride along the inclined surface of said circumferential band, whereby the band grips the external surface even tighter if the oilfield tubular attempts to escape the grip of the band.

4. The load ring according to Claim 1, wherein said first cylindrical ring is manufactured from metal, and including in addition thereto, a second cylindrical ring having upper and lower ends, and said second cylindrical rings is manufactured from hard plastic which is bonded to the exterior of the sidewall and its lower end bonded to the top surface of said shoulder ring.

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5. The load ring according to Claim 4, wherein said second cylindrical ring is a split-ring.

6. The load ring according to Claim 5, wherein said second cylindrical ring has a sidewall having a cut-out portal aligned with said second groove to allow access to the handle of said latch mechanism contained in said circumferential groove.

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7. The load ring according the Claim 6, wherein the upper end of said second cylindrical ring has a beveled edge allowing easier passage of said load ring through the elevator slips.

8. A load ring for raising and/or lowering an oilfield tubular having a box end and a pin end, comprising:

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a cylindrical ring sized to slide over the exterior surface of the box end of said tubular, said ring having a first end, a second end, and a shoulder ring having upper and lower surfaces at its first end and a sidewall between said second end and said shoulder end, said sidewall having a circumferential groove about its interior surface, and a second groove through said sidewall for accessing said circumferential groove;

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a split-ring metal band having first and second ends positioned within said circumferential groove having latch means connected between said first and second ends of said band, said latch means, when activated, reducing the internal diameter of said band, and when

deactivated, increasing the internal diameter of said band, whereby the activation of said latch means causes said band to grip the exterior surface of said tubular, and the deactivation of said latch means causes said band to release the exterior surface of said tubular.

5 **9.** The load ring according to Claim 8, wherein said band has, at least in parts, a saw tooth inner diameter for gripping the external surfaces of said oilfield tubular.

10 **10.** The load ring according to Claim 9, wherein the circumferential groove has an inclined surface, and said metal band has an inclined surface which can ride along the inclined surface of said circumferential band, whereby the band grips the external surface of said tubular even tighter if the oilfield tubular attempts to escape the grip of the band.

15 **11.** The load ring according to Claim 8, wherein said first cylindrical ring is manufactured from metal, and including in addition thereto, a second cylindrical ring having upper and lower ends, and said second cylindrical ring is manufactured from hard plastic which is bonded to the exterior of the sidewall and its lower end bonded to the top surface of said shoulder ring.

12. The load ring according to Claim 11, wherein said second cylindrical ring is a split-ring.

20 **13.** The load ring according to Claim 12, wherein said second cylindrical ring has a sidewall having a cut-out portal aligned with said second groove to allow access to the said latch means contained in said circumferential groove.

14. The load ring according to the Claim 13, wherein the upper end of said second cylindrical

ring has a beveled edge allowing easier passage of said load ring through the elevator slips.

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